

## **SWAC Beyond Waste Subcommittee**

July 27, 2004

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee's (SWAC) Beyond Waste Subcommittee meeting convened at 9:30 a.m. on July 27, 2004 at the Ecology Headquarters Building in Lacey. In attendance were: Norm LeMay, Brad Lovaas, Jerry Smedes, Bill Reed, Lorie Hewitt, Craig Lorch, Gene Eckhardt, Suellen Mele, Damon Taam, David Stitzal, Sally Toteff, Dan Gee, Jeff Kelly-Clarke, Cheryl Smith and Cullen Stephenson. Doug LeMay, Dean Large, and Rob Guttridge attended as guests. Sego Jackson attended as alternate to Jeff Kelly-Clarke. Dee Endelman facilitated and Eli Asher took notes.

### Welcome and Introduction

Dee stated her assumption that people in attendance who were not members of the SWAC Subcommittee would not participate in the discussion of the Subcommittee's letter. All agreed. She then reviewed the agenda for the group:

#### Desired Outcomes

- Agreement on letter
- Action plan for plan completion/implementation

9:30 a.m. Welcome

9:40 Public meeting update

9:50 Review of comment letter

11:30 Next steps

- Plan completion
- Subcommittee role—implementation plan
- Budget add

12:00 Noon Adjourn

### Timeline and Public Meetings Update

Cheryl Smith reviewed the schedule for the issuance of the final Beyond Waste Plans. She said that the final plans would be issued in October 2004, and that the comment period continued until August 13, 2004. Ecology is in the process of preparing a draft implementation plan, and expects to ask for SWAC review of it in September.

Cheryl noted that some background information papers were not posted on the Beyond Waste website before the Beyond Waste public meetings: papers on solid waste history in Washington State, the current solid waste system description, and solid waste planning. She said that the solid waste history paper is now posted on the Beyond Waste website. Ecology is still developing the paper on the current state of solid waste in Washington.

Cheryl reviewed the major topics to be included in the paper on the current state of solid waste (Attachment 1). She explained that Ecology is not planning to issue a background paper on solid waste planning, since it has already been adequately covered in the Beyond Waste Plans Summary Document. The additional background pieces do not

include recommendations; rather, they are purely informational. According to Cheryl, Ecology welcomes comments on the background information papers, but does not expect discussion at the SWAC Subcommittee meeting.

One participant noted that, since describing the elements of the Washington's solid waste system has historically stirred some controversy in the solid waste field, it is likely that some Subcommittee members would like to review that paper. The participant also commented that this was very valuable information, but that it was very late to add a large body of information to the plan. Another participant commented that the current system description paper should be part of the plan only if there is a comment and discussion period; it should not be included without collaborative effort with stakeholders. An Ecology employee suggested that the current system paper could be included later in the process, after issuance of the plan and after discussion with stakeholder groups.

Cheryl explained that much of the information included in the four-page history papers was taken from annual solid waste reports. She also reviewed the differences between the Beyond Waste Plans and past statewide solid and hazardous plans.

The committee agreed to review the background papers and suggest changes, but asked that the current system description paper be left out of the Beyond Waste Plans at this time so that the group could make a recommendation on the Plans as written.

Cheryl then gave a brief overview of the Beyond Waste Public Outreach Meetings. She reviewed the meetings summary, including locations, number and affiliation of the participants, etc. She noted that a summary written by Agreement Dynamics would shortly be posted on the Beyond Waste website.

One participant stated that the documents need to clearly state why we are proposing these actions, as a natural resistance to change exists and readers need to understand the need for this transition. It was also requested that the document clearly explain whether it is an initiative or a plan. Cheryl noted that some context about the need for transition is provided in the Summary document section about "Some misconceptions about Washington's current waste management system."

The group briefly discussed stakeholder attendance at the public meetings. Regarding the relatively low private sector participation, one participant commented that Ecology should partner with groups such as chambers of commerce in the future to increase business participation in similar processes.

#### Comment Letter to Ecology Regarding the Beyond Waste Draft Plans

Jeff Kelly-Clarke reviewed the draft letter to Ecology from the SWAC regarding the Beyond Waste Plans. He noted that he had made changes since the first draft in response to comments made by several Subcommittee members.

Dee asked the group if there were additional areas to cover. During the ensuing conversation, several participants provided additional language for discussion.

The group discussed a number of additions and language changes in both the general comment portion and the specific comment portion of the letter. The final letter that was presented to the SWAC, complete with changes made during the SWAC Subcommittee meeting, is included as Attachment 2.

#### Next Steps

To have collaborative discussions regarding the Finance Chapter, a group of participants from within subcommittee agreed to meet, discuss and revise the short financing summary and the background paper for inclusion in the Plans. Some participants expressed doubt that the longer financing paper could be agreed upon in time for plan issuance in October but all agreed to try. The following people volunteered to meet and discuss the financing materials: Norm LeMay, Brad Lovaas, Jerry Smedes, Bill Reed, Gene Eckhardt, Suellen Mele, Damon Taam, Rob Guttridge (a member of the SWAC) and Jeff Kelly-Clarke. The group agreed that other SWAC members would be invited to join that group. Cheryl Smith volunteered to contact group members and convene the meeting.

Cullen Stephenson reported that, in its upcoming budget, Ecology is proposing to add four full-time employees for the Beyond Waste Project to act as initiative leads. The new employees would be responsible for reaching out to business and other private sector stakeholders. He also said that Ecology recognizes the need for assistance to local jurisdictions to implement Beyond Waste. Also, an additional \$5 million in CPG monies is being requested, and the Toxics Control Account revenues should support this. This means that more monies should be available for local jurisdictions in the next biennium.

One participant requested that Ecology allocate more resources to solid waste enforcement. He said that counties do not have the resources to deal with illegal hauling and sham recycling. Cullen replied that a portion of the funds would be available for enforcement projects.

With respect to their future role, the group agreed that the SWAC Subcommittee would be called together if the financing group fails to reach consensus on the financing background paper. The financing group will distribute electronic copies to the subcommittee prior to distribution to the full SWAC. They would also agree to be called together if Ecology seeks additional input as it finalizes the Plans.

Cheryl offered to send Issue paper 10, the economist paper, PowerPoint presentation, and other financing materials via email to the members of the financing group prior to their first meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:05.

**Attachment 2**  
**Washington State Solid Waste Advisory Committee**

July 27, 2004

Cullen Stephenson  
Dept. of Ecology, Box 47600  
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Dear Cullen:

The State Solid Waste Advisory Committee has reviewed the Draft Beyond Waste Plan, issued in May of this year, and has a number of comments on the document.

First, we recognize that this Plan is unusual in several respects. It took four years to develop, and its concepts were developed as part of the planning process—it was not a simple documentation of an established idea. It is the combination of two previously separate plans—the State Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste Plans—which may seem very similar but in fact are different in many ways. Many of its recommendations look thirty years or more into the future. Although this is much longer than typical planning timelines, the Plan process includes ongoing course corrections. And while the Plan was developed by the Department of Ecology with input mainly from those closely associated with solid waste issues—regulators, local government, recyclers, resource agencies, and the private sector solid waste industry—it depends for its success on the rest of society—builders, manufacturers, resource extractors, residents, elected officials, and many others.

Second, the Draft comes to us at a very challenging time. This region is only starting to recover from a difficult recession, which has affected residents and businesses, local and state government, private sector recyclers and haulers, and environmental organizations. Each of us is acutely focused on economic survival, yet we are being asked to comment on a Plan whose implications—for society and for our fiscal solvency--run far beyond the foreseeable future.

Third, the Committee and our Beyond Waste Subcommittee have played an important role in shaping and developing the Plan. To our memory it was SWAC comments that got the effort started. We considered and signed off on a mission statement, members worked on committees to draft background papers, and a number of us served on a SWAC subcommittee in 2003 that provided comments to Ecology on the final focus of the Plan. While we now must serve our role as an advisory committee, we need to acknowledge that Ecology staff did not develop the Plan in a vacuum: our fingerprints may be found in most corners of its pages.

Our final general comment is that Ecology staff has worked hard to develop a public process for the Plan, including outreach to diverse groups in a variety of venues. Involving a greater slice of the public and the business community in a plan such as this, when it does not present an immediate impact on their interests, is very difficult. Most of us attended a number of public meetings through the process, and saw few people who were not part of the solid and hazardous waste “industry.” Yet successful implementation will affect everyone in the State. This is not a complaint, since we understand the thanklessness of the task. But it is recognition that Beyond Waste is a far-reaching effort of which the general public is almost entirely unaware.

Following are more specific comments. Given the broad representation of the SWAC, I will make clear which are unanimous conclusions, and where there are dissenting views.

- The SWAC supports the Beyond Waste Plan. While various members would like to see other efforts emphasized as well, we believe that the five core initiatives—Industries, Small Volume Hazardous Materials and Waste, Organics, Green Building, and Measurement—should be high priorities and receive effort at the state and local level. The overarching theme of the Plan is sustainability—to use resources in a way that provides opportunity for future generations. We agree with that concept. At the same time, the Plan stresses a healthy and sustainable economy. SWAC members have consistently viewed the Draft Plan through the lens of what various aspects mean to existing and potential business and industry, and to job creation. We believe that sustainability and a healthy economy can and must be mutually supportive.
- The purpose and use of the Plan should be clarified. On page 3, the Summary Document states “... the purpose is to provide statewide guidance for reducing the use of toxic substances, decreasing waste generation, increasing recycling, and properly managing waste that remain.” That description does not clarify key questions, such as:
  - > Is the Plan to be used as a guide for counties when developing their local comprehensive solid waste and hazardous waste management plans?
  - > Is the Plan prescriptive to any entities?
  - > Will the Plan be used to help leverage legislation and grant funding?
- Work has been done on a Finance chapter, but the draft version is incomplete, and what has been completed does not adequately address the concerns of all our members. Briefly, the last fifteen years since passage of the Waste Not Washington Act have seen major strides by various parties in safe and economical solid waste management. Landfills and waste-to-energy facilities meet modern standards, more than a third of all waste is recycled, curbside collection of residential and commercial waste is prevalent and economical. Beyond Waste asks us all to go further, but challenges the volume-based foundation of many service providers who will be asked to implement programs. The collection of solid waste and residential recyclables is regulated in a manner that has been an integral part of these successes within Washington State and can be an integral

part of achieving the Beyond Waste goals. The final Finance chapter should not try to dictate how to pay for Beyond Waste; rather, it needs to explain how implementation of the Plan might challenge existing funding methods, and highlight the need to develop funding methods to meet these potential new conditions while making productive use of well-established players.

- All members agree that it is appropriate to include a Financing Chapter in the long-range plan. However, it is important that the final chapter be developed collaboratively and includes broad based perspectives. We recommend that a subset of SWAC Subcommittee review both the Financing Chapter and the attendant background paper (Financing Solid Waste for the Future) for the purpose of revising these works for inclusion in the final Plan.
- The Plan is not clear on how it relates to local solid waste and hazardous waste plans. Are county plans required to be revised to help carry out the statewide vision? Or should they be focused on local concerns? Many of the implementation strategies in the initiatives focus on Ecology's role; there should be more discussion of the roles of local government, state government and the private sector in achieving the objectives of the initiatives.
- More attention should be paid to "low-hanging fruit," such as paper recycling, which represents a foundation element of recycling that is far from its optimal level.
- The waste-to-energy process needs to be described in the "Today's Realities" portion of the Disposal Section of the Solid Waste Issues section.
- Many members do not agree that a key principle should be to work toward "less regulation" over time. While that is an effective strategy in some areas, elsewhere it is not. As is, the statement implies that all regulation is bad, which is clearly not the case. For example, regulation of solid waste and residential recyclables collection has served this state very well since 1961. Regulation of recycling can also provide accountability, and assure a high level of service and environmental protection.

Thank you for the chance to work with Ecology staff on drafting the Plan, and for the opportunity to comment on the draft.

Sincerely,

Jeff Kelley-Clarke  
Chair, State SWAC

cc: State SWAC

# **Attachment 1**

## **Beyond Waste Project**

### **Working Outline for Current State of Solid Waste Chapter**

This is intended to be a roll-up description across the state. Where we can't get that information, then we should try to find "averages" or include at least some anecdotal information--such as for a particular county

1. Amounts and types of waste generated in Washington
  - Definitions
  - How various categories/types of waste--how separated & why
  - Where are the various wastes generated?
  - What we track and what we don't track
  - Projections of materials--trends
  - Recycling rate--we're not meeting the goal
2. Authorities & Responsibilities
  - Federal
  - State
  - Local
3. Overview of services in local jurisdictions
  - How services are determined
  - Status of local sw plans
  - Status of local hw plans
  - Status of contracts and service level ordinances
4. Where all this stuff goes
  - Material slated for disposal
  - Material diverted from disposal
  - Anecdotes about traveling trash
  - #s of various types of intermediate facilities, including MRW facilities
  - Disposal capacity, composting capacity, recycling capacity (supply Vs demand)
  - Projected needs for and plans for add'l facilities
5. Overview of collection system
  - Certificated system and haulers
  - Collection services outside certificated system
  - Gaps in coverage map
6. Overview of costs (for collection and disposal primarily)
  - Residential
  - Commercial
  - Industrial and "other"

- Disposal facility tip fees
- Other revenue sources
- Sources of revenue (surcharges, grants and others)

## 7. Conclusions